

## **AT HOME WITH JESUS**

Text: Matthew 21:17

John 11:1b: *"...Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha."*

Bethany became the home address of Jesus. It is true our Lord said, *"...Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head"* (Luke 9:58). Our Lord had no permanent dwelling on this earth, but the place he hung His "hat" seemed to be Bethany. The house most frequented by our Lord was the household of Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

### **I. Martha, the Laboring Sister**

A. Martha owned the house.

Luke 11:38. This is not a bad point to be made, i.e., that Martha took ownership of the house, because the Bible, speaking of the aged women, says, *"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed"* (Titus 2:4, 5). Then the Bible also admonishes, *"I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully"* (I Timothy 5:14).

Some of the hardest and yet most rewarding work to be done is the work of the homemaker. We see that Martha was a hard-working sister. Luke 11:40 points out that she served.

B. The house owned Martha.

It's one thing to take ownership of the house, but when the house owns you, you are in trouble. People are more important than the house. Acknowledging this is not a license to become slothful in our labor, relish

unkemptness or to turn into a hoarder. But the Bible does say, “Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox” (Proverbs 14:4). This is not to say kids are identical to oxen; it is to say wherever you have life, you have a potential mess. Enjoy your kids! The home is made up of people, the house is where they live, not the “be all, end all.”

I love the poem by Edgar Guest, Home. Here’s a portion:

“It takes a heap o’ livin’ in a house t’ make it home,  
Home ain’t a place that gold can buy or get up in a minute;  
Afore it’s home there’s got t’ be a heap o’ livin’ in it;  
Within the walls there’s got t’ be some babies born, and then  
Right there ye’ve got t’ bring ‘em up t’ women good, an’ men;  
And gradjerly, as time goes on, ye find ye wouldn’t part  
With anything they ever used—they’ve grown into yer heart:  
The old high chairs, the playthings, too, the little shoes they wore  
Ye hoard; an’ if ye could ye’d keep the thumbmarks on the door.”

C. Martha was overloaded within the house.

Luke 10:40-42. Poor Martha was “...cumbered about with much serving....”  
Jesus addressed her and her kind in Matthew 11:28-30.

## **II. Mary, the Loving Sister**

A. Mary was in the reverential place.

Luke 10:40. The feet of Jesus is the learning place. This is where we can learn so much. Like John of whom the Bible says, “Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved” (John 13:23). John was close enough to hear the heartbeat of Jesus. Are you that close?

B. Mary was most responsive to Jesus’ teachings

John 12:3, 7. Mark 14:3, 8,9. She understood most clearly what Jesus planned to do. Look at some of the references that Jesus made of His upcoming death and resurrection: Matthew 16:21; Matthew 20:17; Mark 8:31, Mark 12:40 and John 2:19.

C. Mary was rebuked by the enemies of Christ for her expression of love to Jesus.

Mark 14:4-7. John 12:4-6. Jesus said, *"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also"* (John 15:19,20).

### **III. Lazarus, the Living Brother**

A. Lazarus was loved by Jesus.

John 11:3. John 11: 35,36. We should evermore realize we have the ability to love Christ because He first loved us. *"We love him, because he first loved us"* (I John 4:19). Christ loves us through every phase of our life. In sickness and in health. Sickness is never a criterion through which we measure the love of God. Paul, at whose hands miracles from God often flowed, had to say, *"...Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick"* (II Timothy 4:20b).

B. Lazarus was in friendship with Jesus.

John 11:11. This is where all of us need to be. This is the desire of our Lord who said, *"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you"* (John 15:14). How foolish we are not to go deeper with God, for He *"...is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother"* (Proverbs 18:24b). Friendship with man can be fleeting, fickle and forsaken, but when you have a Friend in Jesus, it is forever, *"...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"* (Hebrews 13:5b).

C. Lazarus was a display of the Living God.

John 11:3-15; 38-44. I once heard a simple, theological definition of the glory of God as "the display of God." Another definition of the glory of God, I borrow from Dr. John Piper: "The glory of God is the infinite beauty and greatness of his manifold perfections." I love how Dr. J. Rodman Williams expressed the glory of God: "The Divine glory is the radiant splendor and awesome majesty of God Himself. Glory is not so much a particular attribute belonging to His identity, transcendence, character or perfections, but the effulgence of splendor and majesty that shines through every aspect of God's being and action. The glory of God is like an aureole emanating from and surrounding Him." Dr. Wayne Grudem defines God's glory as follows: "God's glory is the created brightness that surrounds God's revelation of Himself." This Scripture speaks of the glory of God in the new Jerusalem: "*And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*" (Revelation 21:23). We have all sinned and fallen short of that glory of God as told us in Romans 3:23. Jesus is the sum total of all that is glorious in God. When we become one with in Him in the new birth, that glory is imparted to us, "*But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*" (II Corinthians 3:18). Dr. Grudem ramified his explanation of the glory of God by saying: "Though we do not now find ourselves surrounded by a visible light, there is a brightness, a splendor, or a beauty about the manner of life of a person who deeply loves God, and it is often evident to those around such a person." Lazarus became a resurrected harbinger of our own resurrection promised to all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is no wonder that the chief priests sought to put Lazarus to death, because his life was testament to the glory of God emanating from the life of Jesus and expressed in the friend of Jesus, Lazarus.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Johnny Pope". The signature is written in black ink and features a large, decorative initial "J" that loops around the first part of the name. The name "Johnny" is written in a fluid, connected cursive, and "Pope" follows in a similar style. A long, horizontal flourish extends from the end of the signature to the right.